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# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Office of Information

Picture Story No. 107

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## FIGHTING THE

# Fever Tick



3917B - Engorged female fever tick laying eggs. She drops to ground from host animal and may lay as many as 3500 eggs. Infection, if present in host, passes through eggs to seed ticks. Seed ticks spread disease to cattle on which they feed. Tick's life cycle may take 6 to 10 weeks in warm weather.



N - 22067 - Cattle in infested areas of Florida are dipped in approved concentration of chemical to kill ticks. Fifty to 100 cattle can be treated per hour in a 2000 - gallon vat. Ticks remaining in pasture and re-infesting animals are killed by subsequent dippings.

The cattle fever tick, found in Florida this spring for the first time since the Federal quarantine was lifted in 1950, is a potential carrier of piroplasmiasis, a destructive blood disease of cattle. The tick also injures cattle by sucking large amounts of blood. Heavily infested animals waste away and become unprofitable; dairy cows produce less milk; young animals are retarded in growth; hides of tick-infested cattle bring lower prices.

Since discovery of the tropical variety of the dangerous pest on cattle at Okeechobee, Fla., in April, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has been cooperating with the Florida Livestock Board in a vigorous eradication program. Trained inspectors are tracking down tick-infested herds. State quarantines have been placed on more than 100 ranches in 10 Florida counties. Cattle and horses in infested areas are subject to treatment by dipping in an appropriate tickicide at regular intervals. Fever-tick experts estimate that, barring complications, dipping animals thoroughly over a period of 8 to 12 months should eradicate the tick from infested premises.

A 15-state eradication program begun in 1907 against the tick was successfully terminated in 1943. Only a narrow buffer zone 550 miles along the Mexican-Texas border has remained under Federal quarantine because of reinfestation by animals illegally entering from Mexico.

Florida's active commerce with neighboring fever-tick infested West Indies exposes her to constant danger of reinfestation. Outbreaks previous to that found in Okeechobee last Spring occurred in the State in 1946 and 1948. Periodic infestations have also been found in California, which has a common border with tick-infested areas in Mexico.

The fever tick is a menace to cattle everywhere in the United States, but especially in the South. Continued growth of the livestock industry may be assured only by vigorous action against new attacks of the fever tick as well as against other devastating diseases and pests of livestock.

The pictures that follow show activities of the cattle fever-tick eradication program.

Magazines and newspapers may obtain glossy prints of any of these photographs from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. Others may purchase prints, at 85¢ each, from the same address.





N - 22072 - Inspector examines cattle for ticks before dipping, while animals are in restraining chute. Ticks are usually found inside the thighs, flanks, forelegs, and along the belly and brisket. Ticks found must be identified.



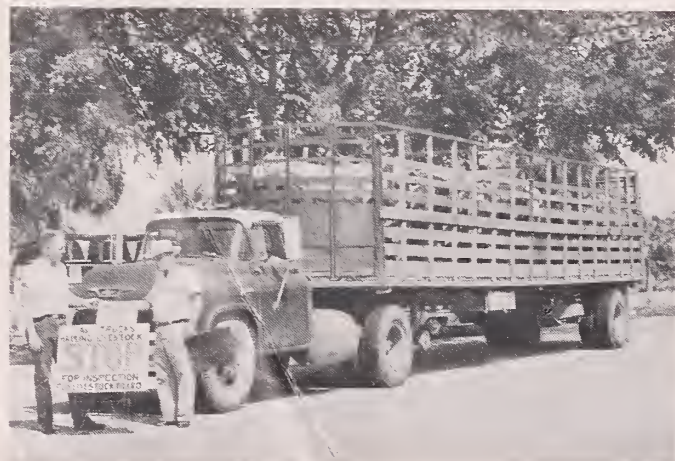
N - 22076 - Animals are paint-marked for identification as they emerge after swimming through vat. Left shoulder is marked for first dipping, left side for the second, left hip for the third. This order is repeated on the opposite side.



N - 22079 - Inspection for ticks is repeated while animals are in the dripping pen following each dipping. With the hair wet and flattened ticks can be seen more readily.



N - 22060 - Range riders check herds following each dipping to detect any animals that don't carry the current paint mark. This is a necessary precaution to make sure all animals are treated.



N - 22056 - Road blocks are used on highways leading from areas under State quarantine. Permits showing animals are eligible to move are checked by quarantine officer to prevent exit or entry of untreated cattle.



N - 22054 - Trucks and other vehicles used for carrying tick-infested cattle must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each shipment.